

**A Case Study of
Robin's Egg Head Start
1111 Bird's Eye View Way
Hawk's Nest, Orebama**

This case study of the fictional Robin's Egg Head Start has been developed for the purposes of this **PRISM Mental Health Services Reviewer Training** only. The program, its students, staff, families, location, and documents are entirely imagined. They are not based on any actual programs, people, places, or documents.

The case study is written to simulate the experience of a PRISM review during which information becomes available over time and from a variety of resources. As in an actual review, reviewers will gather information, develop questions, seek more information to answer those questions, achieve clarity, and by the end of the training, prepare a written statement of any areas of noncompliance. At the end of this exercise you will NOT have all the detailed information that you will want to have during an actual review. Part of the learning experience is for you to keep track of what you still need to find out—just as in an actual review.

Six scenarios will yield the description of Robin's Egg Head Start as it is on the week of the review. They will be distributed after the lecture in each session so that the groups can apply information in the scenario as they use the protocol.

- Part 1 - Program Description
- Part 2 - Program Planning and Management for Quality Mental Health Services
- Part 3 - Early Identification of Children's Mental Health Needs
- Part 4 - Parent Involvement in Children's Mental Health
- Part 5 - Mental Health Education and Intervention for Parents
- Part 6 - Specialized Help for Children's Individualized Mental Health Needs

Please note:

- Just as in any review, information becomes clearer over time and you build on each experience as you go along. Remember then that each handout may yield information that applies to any section of the Protocol. It will be necessary to go back to each handout during each session throughout this workshop.
- By the end of the training session each reviewer will prepare written statements on an area of noncompliance found in **Robin's Egg's Mental Health Services**.

Robin's Egg Head Start
Part 1: Program Description

Robin's Egg Head Start
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Robin's Egg HS has 10 centers throughout Aviaary County and offers both Head Start and Early Head Start services. The Head Start centers provide full-day, full-year center-based services to all preschoolers with a combination of Head Start and State funding as well as home-based services to a small group of 15 children in one community. Early Head Start services are provided in 4 centers (which are shared with HS) and 8 family child care homes for up to 100 children and families. Currently 20 pregnant mothers are receiving home visiting services and they meet in 2 centers. The Robin's Egg HS centers are located in 6 school buildings and 4 community agencies. A break down of each program is as follows:

Head Start serves 830 children with \$5,395,000 federal funding or \$6,500/child.

Early Head Start serves 120 children (includes 20 pregnant women) with \$1,260,000 federal funding or \$10,500/child.

The Head Start and Early Head Start grantee is Aviaary Community Action Program (known locally as ACAP). Aviaary County is in transition. Until 20 years ago it was a rural community 50 miles from a major urban area and the economy was almost completely agriculture. While agriculture is still the largest industry in Aviaary County, there has been a huge housing boom and much of the former farmland has been replaced by large, suburban tracts of homes. Therefore, the median housing cost and income is extremely high. On the other hand, there are large areas of poverty especially among farm workers and their families. In one community it is not uncommon to find up to 4 families living in a single 3-bedroom bungalow.

Approximately half of the children in Aviaary County are non-native English speakers. In the 2000 census the racial distribution is 45% Hispanic, 2% African-American, 5% Asian-American, 3% Native American, Pacific Islander, etc, and 45% White.

The administrative staff of the Robin's Egg Head Start includes:

- Director
- 5 Service Area managers: One manager has responsibilities for both Family and Community Partnerships and Mental Health
- EHS Manager

Each center has a Center Director who is responsible for staff at that center and for the childcare partnerships in that catchment area. In two of the smaller centers the Center Directors also serve as the lead teachers. There are also 2 EHS Coordinators who provide direct supervision and support to EHS home visitors, to family child care homes serving EHS children, and to the staff at the center-based sites.

Cuervo Paloma, the bilingual, bicultural Family and Community Partnerships and Mental Health Services Area Manager, has a BA in social work but no license or formal training as a mental health service provider. She began her work at Robin's Egg as a Family Service Worker, took on leadership roles, and has been in this dual management role for 5 years. Ms. Paloma has developed her skill and knowledge base in the area of mental health through reading, in-service training, as well as personal and work experience. She is recognized as a leader among her peers in her own agency and in the community. Her own child, who is now 8 years old, had behavioral difficulties as a young child and she is a strong advocate for early identification and access to mental health services. She knows the important role of her child's early care experience and the consistent care of his regular teacher in his preparation for kindergarten. She is concerned about the impact of the agency's recent, large amount of unexpected turnover as a result of the new "Preschool for All" program, which pays considerably more than Head Start and, therefore, has just hired many new Early Head Start and Head Start staff. She knows that these changes have an impact on the remaining staff as well as the children and families the program serves.